

100 miles) and a chalet with a studio, a balcony, a manger, a huge kitchen, and three bedrooms—a view of the sea, and trees—all for 12,000 francs—£480. If I can write a play I am going to have it begun. Fancy one's own lovely house and grounds in France for £480. No rent of any kind. Pray consider this, and approve, if you think well. Of course, not till I have done my play.

An old gentleman lives here in the hotel. He dines alone in his room, and then sits in the sun. He came here for two days and has stayed two years. His sole sorrow is that there is no theatre. Monsieur Bonnet is a little heartless about this, and says that as the old gentleman goes to bed at 8 o'clock a theatre would be of no use to him. The old gentleman says he only goes to bed at 8 o'clock because there is no theatre. They argued the point yesterday for an hour. I sided with the old gentleman, but logic sides with Monsieur Bonnet, I believe.

I had a sweet letter from the Sphinx.¹ She gives me a delightful account of Ernest^a subscribing to Romeike while his divorce suit was running, and not being pleased with some of the notices. Considering the growing appreciation of Ibsen I must say that I am surprised the notices were not better, but nowadays everybody is jealous of every one else, except, of course, husband and wife. I think I shall keep this last remark of mine for my play.

Have you got my silver spoon³ from Reggie? You got my silver brushes out of Humphreys,⁴ who is bald, so you might easily get my spoon out of Reggie, who has so many, or used to have. You know my crest is on it. It is a bit of Irish silver, and I don't want to lose it. There is an excellent substitute called Britannia metal, very much liked at the Adelphi and elsewhere. Wilson Barrett writes, "I prefer it to silver." It would suit dear Reggie admirably. Walter Besant writes, "I use none other." Mr. Beerbohm Tree also writes, "Since I have tried it I am a different actor; my friends hardly recognize me." So there is obviously a demand for it.

I am going to write a Political Economy in my heavier moments. The first law I lay down is, "Whenever there exists a demand, there is *no* supply." This is the only law that explains the extraordinary contrast between the soul of man

¹ The Sphinx is a nickname for Mrs. Ada Leverson, the novelist.

^a Ernest was her husband.

³ This refers to some saying of Wilde's which Reginald Turner supposed to have repeated as his own.

⁴ Wilde's solicitor in Regina t». Wilde.